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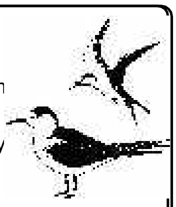

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A Note from the Publisher

Dear fellow birdwatchers,

Seminar on Bird Flu - Missing the woods for the trees?

More often than not, partial knowledge of bird ecology and keyhole observations bring about misleading conjectures. Such inferences may not have serious implications in a logical sense, but when the subject under scrutiny is a burning issue like the avian influenza, misinterpretations could well spell disasters. A like situation happened at a ‘Seminar on the Avian Influenza’, organized by a Veterinary Institute at Bangalore in December 2005, wherein an avian ecologist missed the woods for the trees when he dwelt at length on the ecology of Bar-headed geese.

Instead of resting the case on honest or defensible view point, the said ecologist had taken the shadow for the substance, when he temerariously maintained that the Bar-headed geese remain far too away in the middle of the reservoirs to be able to spread any communicable disease. He pursued his wild goose chase, with illustrations to substantiate his claim that the Bar-headed geese always remain in the middle of the lakes and seldom come in contact with humans or pose a threat to their poultry or livestock.

The seminar on Avian Influenza was organized to enable poultry farmers, traders, pathologists and veterinarians to draw on the expertise and experience of others, pool resources and to be prepared to respond effectively to bird flu outbreaks. As such, the participants were generally unacquainted with wild bird ecology; they believed the findings of the avian ecologist and heaved a sigh of relief. None appeared to have given their attention to the erroneous conjecture, except the next speaker who drew their attention to the misgivings about the feeding behavior of the Bar-headed geese and set the record straight.

It is true that Bar-headed geese prefer to stay away from humans in the middle of the reservoirs during day time, but it is also true that they will be in the proximity of humans soon after people retire to bed, blissfully unaware that the suspected carriers of the H5N1 virus are roaming in the backyards and paddy fields. Many are unaware that the Bar-headed geese not only feed on paddy but also defecate in the paddy fields as they forage in and around the said fields in search of ripe paddy panicles. Virologists have confirmed that the H5N1 virus can retain its virulence in the bird feces for up to 150 days and there is every possibility of the virus getting into the barns along with the feces as the contaminated paddy is shifted to the barns and later to the market place. On that count alone there is every reason to believe that H5N1 virus could strike, and it could not only afflict domestic poultry but also spread uncontrollably. Think about what could happen when commercially bred chicken that have little resistance are exposed to the dreadful H5N1 virus. Therefore, it will be sensible to draw inferences based on day time observations of the Bar-headed geese in the lakes, as also their night time forays into the paddy fields.

In May 2005, hundreds of Bar-headed geese were found dead in the Qinghai Lake, China due to A/H5N1, the highly pathogenic avian influenza strain. The latest isolates from Qinghai Lake are particularly lethal, killing laboratory mice and chickens in a day or more and appears to have been readily transferable among migratory birds at the lake. Furthermore, migration of Bar-headed geese between Qinghai Hu and South Asia has been established through recoveries of ringed birds. Incidentally, one such ring with Chinese inscriptions was recovered by Dr. Uttangi, from a Bar headed geese at Haveri tank, North Karnataka in 1988. (*Newsletter for Birdwatchers 28: 3-4; 15*). Certainly, this was not just speculation on someone’s part. Nevertheless many are apparently oblivious to the ecology and migratory behavior of waterfowl and therefore they are dismissing the bird flu threat, on the grounds that wild birds afflicted with H5N1 virus will be too weak to complete their winter migration. But it is universal knowledge that the H5N1 virus has the ability to remain dormant in wild ducks without symptoms – a combination that helps to keep the virus in circulation. It is also strongly believed that wild birds are capable of

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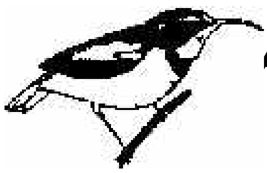

A Note on the Breeding of Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja* in Ratnagiri Dist., Maharashtra

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Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja* is perhaps the most magnificent and attractive among sunbirds found in Konkan. One can see this purple, green and crimson coloured sunbird (male) in the flower gardens, groves and around the shrubs. The female is dusky olive in colour. We were very lucky to get a chance to watch some 15 nests of this bird.

The Crimson Sunbird is widely distributed in moist deciduous and evergreen forests of India. There are two subspecies viz., '*seheriae'* found in the Himalayas and continental India and '*vigorsii*' , with yellow streaks on breast, found in the Western Ghats (Ali & Ripley, 1999).

Nest and Nest Building:

Crimson Sunbird's nesting season in Chiplun is June to September. The season seems to be different from published literature. The pendant shaped nests are built with - coconut fibers, electric wires or aerial-roots of trees. The nests are made up of grass blades; leaves of *Areca catechu* etc. The Nest itself is pear-shaped with a lateral entrance, which is covered by a roof on the upper side. The measurements of one nest were taken as 13 cm long, 7.5 cm wide and it had a 8 cm roof (porch) over the entrance. The diameter of the entrance was 3.5 cm.

The nests were placed between 1 and 5 meters. Nest construction was carried out by the female and the male seldom took part in the nest construction activities.

Eggs and Incubation:

The creamy whitish coloured eggs were laid at an interval of 24 hours. The usual clutch size was found to be three. Eggs were incubated by the female only. Male never entered the nest during the period of incubation. Incubation was continued during the night also. At the typical nest, we found the incubation period to be 15 -16 days. Chicks fledge after 15 days. Male was also found feeding the chicks. But here also the female's contribution was almost 90%.

Notes on nests found at different places:

1) Burumtali:

It is a part of Chiplun city. Here we found a nest attached to a coir string dangling from a rafter of a house, during the last week of June 2000. Later we watched chicks in second week of July. But after 10 days the chicks died due to D.D.T. sprayed over the nest by Municipal workers who were not aware of the nest in the house.

The unsuccessful pair built another nest some 25 feet away from the first nest. This nest was 3.5 feet above the ground and three chicks were raised successfully by the pair, in their second attempt.

Though the pair was noticed in 2001 and 2002 in the area, we could not locate their nest. But in 2003 we found one nest attached to another coir string. This nest was some 100 meters away from nest built in 2000. The nest was at a height of 5 meters. Therefore, observations regarding eggs and chicks could not be made. In 2004 also we found that the birds had reused the same nest. Incubation was noticed during the first week of July.

All these nests were built with the support of coir strings, which were attached to a raft of the house.

2) Songaon:

Songaon is a small village 18 kms away from the city of Chiplun. When we went to Songaon during last week of June 2000, we found a female crimson sunbird building a nest on a coir string, which was attached to the rafter of a house. During the first week of July 3 eggs were noticed and by the 3rd week of July there were 3 chicks in the nest and they successfully fledged during the 1st week of August. After a week or so, the female laid another clutch of eggs. By the 3rd or 4th week of September, the chicks of the second brood also fledged from the nest. So the pair was successful in raising two broods in one season.

In May 2001, we removed the nest of 2000 season and tied a new coir string at the same place. The pair built a nest on coir string thus offered and raised two broods successfully. In 2002 and again in 2003 the same experiment was repeated.

There was a little change in the script of 2004. The pair used same place for the first brood. But they built another nest for their second brood. This nest was 25 feet away from the first nest. The nest was at a height of 5 feet above the ground and one foot away from the wall. On 18th July there were 2 eggs. When we visited the nest again on 1st August we found the nest destroyed by someone. Therefore the female had laid 3 eggs in the old nest. During 2005, the story of 2000 was repeated.

3) Kasaba:

It is small village 48 kms away from Chiplun city. In 2001 we found one nest containing 3 chicks. This nest was built with the support of an electric wire, which had bulb holder attached to it and was two feet away from a window. This was a unique nest and we had not seen this type of nest of this sunbird earlier.

4) Ozarwadi:

A part of Chiplun city. In this area we found a nest at a height of 15 feet in June 2000. The nest was attached to a small branch of *Artocarpus heterophyllus.* The nest had 3 eggs but was predated by House Crow *Corvus splendens.*

This was the only nest in which the eggs did not hatch successfully.

5) Parashuram: -

It is near Chiplun city at a distance of about 8 Kms. On July 17, 2004 we found a nest at a height of 15 feet from the ground. It was attached to a root at an earthen cutting adjacent to Bombay-Goa Highway. We took photographs of the female feeding the chicks. When we checked on 1st August the nest was empty, but it was in good condition. But on 22nd August the female was seen incubating the eggs in the same nest.

6) Lovale:

It is a small village 50 kms away from Chiplun. In June 2003, during a bird watching trip, we found a nest of the crimson sunbird on a coir string which was attached to the rafter of a cow-shed, 4 feet above the ground. 3 chicks successfully fledged from this nest.

Following chart shows details of the nests.

Nest No.	Place	Year	Height in meter	Attached To	Eggs	Chicks	Chicks Fledged
1	B	2000	1.5	Coirstring	3	3	N.A
2	B	2000	1	Coirstring	3	3	3
3a	S	2000	3	Coirstring	3	3	3
3b	S	2000	3	Coirstring	3	3	3
4	0	2000	4.5	Jackfruit	3	N.A	N.A
5a	S	2001	3	Coirstring	3	3	3
5b	S	2001	3	Coirstring	3	3	3
6	K	2001	1.5	Electric wire	3	3	3
7a	S	2002	3	Coirstring	3	3	3
7b	S	2002	3	Coirstring	3	3	3
8a	S	2003	3	Coirstring	3	3	3
8b	S	2003	3	Coirstring	3	3	3
9	L	2003	1.5	Coirstring	N.A	3	3
10	B	2003	4.5	Coirstring	N.A	N.A	N.A
11	S	2004	3	Coirstring	N.A	3	3
12	S	2004	1	Coirstring	3	3	N.A
13	B	2004	4.5	Coirstring	N.A	N.A	N.A
14	P	2004	5	Root in earthen cutting	N.A	3	N.A

a & b indicates first brood and second brood in the same nest.

Abbreviations:

B-Burumtali	S-Songaon	O-Ozarwadi
K-Kasaba	L-Lovale	P-Parashuram

N.A.-Data not available

Conclusion:

We have reported some important facts regarding the breeding of Crimson Sunbird *Aethopyga siparaja.* Female alone builds the nest. The incubation task is also carried out solely by female. Male takes part in feeding the chicks, but large part is done by the female. Eggs are laid at an interval of 24 hours. Normal clutch size is found to be 3 eggs. Incubation period was found to be 15-16 days. Brood succession was noticed in four nests.

Acknowledgment

We thank Mr.Vishwas Katdare and Mr. Ram Mone for their valuable support and guidance. We also thank Mr. Vishwas Joshi and Mr. Parashuram Sagawakar for their help in preparing this report.

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Paradise Flycatcher on the Plains of Tamil Nadu

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Introduction:

The Paradise Flycatcher [*Terpsiphone paradisi*] is a resident in the Himalayas and the peninsular hills [Ali, S, 1996]. One of the races of the former is the south-migrating *leucogaster*, and .the other belongs to the race *paradisi* [Ali, S & Ripley, 1987, Ranjit Daniels, 1997]. Nichols (1944) believes it to be a resident at Sirumalai and Alahar Hills of Madurai District, being found there in July/August. Barnes (1938) had recorded the occurrence of its immature male and female in the Vandalur forest even as early as in July, 1935. In January 1936, for the first time, she observed a male in "Chestnut" streamers in the Madras Christian College estate, Tambaram; much later, on the same campus, an adult female was recorded on 26th October 1997 (Subramanya, S & Aasheesh Pittie, 1997). Ali, S and S.D. Ripley (1987) state that the peninsular population of the species during winter is a commixture of the two races, both almost indistinguishable from each other. In both the forms, the males acquire a white plumage, which is not the case with the Ceylonese race.

Study Area & Method:

I have maintained a record of the sightings of individual males and females of the species on the plains of Tamil Nadu between latitudes of 8.2° N & 13° N and longitudes 76.4° E & 80.2° E. The data have been tabulated. (Table 1). Except for the data for Palayamkottai [8.7° N 77.4° E] and

Tiruchirappalli [10.8° N 78.1° E] where I lived for ten years, and since 1973 respectively, the other records were made during short visits and field study tours.

Observation And Discussion:
At a perusal, the sightings lend themselves to a few assumptions. The majority of the males were young in rufous plumage. Only once had a white male been recorded. On another occasion, a rufous male with long streamers had a white rump; that may have been incipient streamers, or the uppertail coverts themselves moulted to white. It may be construed that moulting begins with the rump or streamers first becoming white, and that it happens during the winter sojourn. This view, however, is vitiated by the occurrence early in the winter quarters of fully moulted male on 23rd October at Tiruchirappalli [Table 1], and on 10th October at Tambaram [Barnes, 1938].

An argument may be advanced that the moulted white males are more than a year old, and once moulted they remain so for ever. This surmise may not be altogether questionable on the strength of the observation in the "Field Characters" of "Old males of 4 years or more" made by Ali, S & Ripley (1987). Despite the male's flashy white plumage in the verdant environment, his rarity, cryptic behaviour and wariness must be a saviour. The white plumage developed during the non-breeding season has no apparent purpose away in the non-breeding area. The fact may be that moulting happens irrespective of the seasons, denoting sexual maturity.

The data of the earliest recorded sightings in the winter quarters in Tamil Nadu were 11th October 1969 at (8.7° N 77.4° E, and 14th October 1988 at 10.8° N 78.1° E. It is remarkable to visualise that the birds are simultaneously, in October, in different geographical locations, including the far flung island in the Palk Bay. In view of the slowness of wing, the onset of migration should be earlier than in October. The bird being in Tanjore District from 18th September (Nichols, 1944), the probability of its leaving the breeding ground must be even earlier. In that case his inference on the birds of Sirumalai and Alahar Hills could not be sustained.

The end-of-the-season sighting was on 24th April 1997 at 9.9° N 78.1° E. In Tanjore District it is said to be 23rd April [Nichols, 1944]. Could the one have been on its return journey from Sirumalai and Alahar Hills, and the other a passage migrant from further east, say, Sri Lanka?

To which of the races do the birds of the population that moves in and out of Tamil Nadu belong? Does the Himalayan race come as far down as the Palk Bay and Tanjore District, and Sri Lanka? The white male recorded here at Tiruchirappalli did not have a cinnamon dorsum. Nichols (1944) records its presence at the Nilgiris. Ranjit Daniels (1997) asserts its presence during the winter in the entire south-western India. It is very likely that the species, particularly the form *leucogaster* requires dense vegetation and occupies only, preferably, the hills and higher elevations and does not move south of 13°-12° N latitude, and that the race *paradisi* is hardier and fans out eastward sweeping down the ghats. In the same vein, it may not be much off the mark to suggest that the population at Sirumalai and Alahar Hills, and Vandalur are resident relics, an enclave of the latter race, *paradisi.* The birds in Chennai, during winter may be a commixture of *leucogaster* and the *paradisi* from Vandalur, a local migrant.

In both the races there would be late-breeding pairs as evidenced by the eggs being in the nest on 22nd June 1922 of *leucogaster*, on 15th August 1914 of *paradisi* (Subramanya & Aasheesh Pittie, 1997). As such, the parental care extending through another month or so, the parents would not be fit to take the arduous journey. Of necessity, therefore, a section of the population should remain back at the breeding habitat as at the Banjara Hills where even in the last week of October there were recorded adult female and immature young.

Record of Paradise Flycatcher's sightings in Tamil Nadu

Sighted At	**On**	**♀**	**♂**	**Male's Plumage**
Anna University:13.0°N 80.2°E	13 Oct 1992	1	-	
Kadayam:9.1 77.4	15 Nov 1963	-	1	Rufous
Kachchanavilai:8.6 78.1	20 Oct 1969	-	1	Rufous
Kodikarai:10.3 79.8	07 Dec 1980	1	-	
Nagamalai:9.9 78.1	24 April 1997	1	-	
Nagercoil:8.2 77.4	02 Nov 1988	1	-	
	26 Nov 1997	1	-	
	23,24 Nov 1998	1.1	-	
Palayamkottai: 8.7 77.4	28 Nov 1963	1	-	
	19 Dec 1963	1	-	
	03 Jan 1964	-	1	Rufous
	11 Oct 1969	1	-	
	14 Oct 1969	2	-	
	17 Jan 1970	2	-	
	15 Oct 1970	1	-	
	25 Oct 1970	1	-	
	26 Oct 1970	-	1	Rufous
	16 Oct 1971	2	-	
Pasumalai : 9.9 78.1	30 Jan 1998	1	-	
Ponnanaiyer: 10.8 76.4	30 Jan 1988	1	-	
Shingle Island: 9.5 79.3	26 Oct 1961	1	-	
Tiruchirapalli : 10.8 78.7	23 Oct 1985	-	1	White
	30 Oct 1987	1	-	
	20 Mar 1988	1	-	
	14 Oct 1988	1	-	
	31 Oct 1996	1	-	
	21 Oct 1997	1	-	
	20 Oct 1998	-	1	Rufous*
	20 Oct 2001	2	-	
	11 Oct 1996	1	-	
Tuticorin : 8.8 78.2	04 Jan 1997	1	-	
* Remark : Upper tail coverts alone white				

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Birds of Dibru-Saikhowa Biosphere Reserve

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Introduction

Bird survey has been carried out from14th May 2002 until date to assess the diversity of birds in Dibru-Saikhowa Biosphere Reserve. To evaluate the diversity pattern of birds in various ecological situations, all together three habitats (Grassland, Woodland, and Wetland) were selected for collection of regular, seasonal data through randomly established line transects, and point transect. Therefore, the survey highlighted the diversity pattern in three different categories of ecological situations and the checklist was prepared.

Study Area:

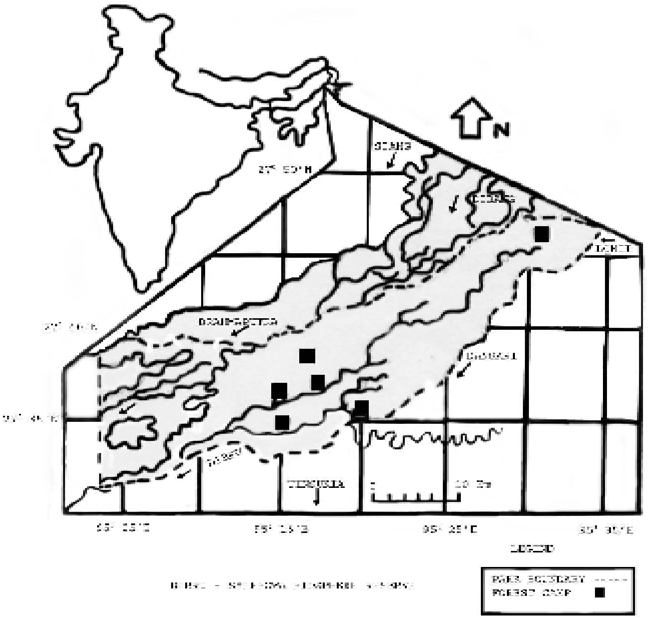
Situated in the easternmost part of India, this national park is about 13 Km north of Tinsukia Town. With 382 species of avifauna, this park covers an area of about 340 Sq. Km. as core area along with about 425 Sq. Km. of buffer zone. With approximately 27° 30/N to 27° 48/N latitude and 95° 03/E to 95° 35/E longitude, this park is the third largest in Assam after Kaziranga and Manas. Bordered by the Brahmaputra on its Northern side and Dibru-river on its south Dibru-Saikhowa is almost like a river island.

The Park is situated on the flat alluvial flood plains of the Brahmaputra and the Lohit River at an altitude of about 118 M above mean sea level. There are some prominent geomorphological evidences that show the marks of rapid changes both in the course of river and streams and in its geomorphological characteristics after the great Assam earthquake of 1950. So the entire biogeography of the Park has been influenced by these changes and the change is still going on. Another important topographical change that determines the biodiversity and bio-ecology of Dibru-Saikhowa National Park is the heavy siltation and massive river erosions every year in the monsoon season.

The Park is situated in the belt of tropical monsoon climate where it enjoys a tropical summer with maximum of 34°C and cool dry winter with minimum of 7°C. The annual rainfall ranges from 2300 mm to 3800 mm and the rainy months are June, July, August and September, of which June, July and August are the hottest and December and January are the coldest of months. The relative humidity ranges between 40-89%.

Conservation History:

1890 : Declaration of Dibru Reserve Forest.
1920 : 1st addition of area to the Dibru Reserve Forest.
1928 : Declaration of Saikhowa Reserve Forest. (Preliminary notification)



1929 : Declaration of Saikhowa Reserve Forest. (Final notification)
1933 : 2nd addition of area to the Dibru Reserve Forest.
1986 : Declaration of Dibru-Saikhowa Wild Life Sanctuary by the inclusion of Dibru and Saikhowa Reserve Forest and some other adjoining areas. Total area – 640sq.km. (Preliminary notification)
1995 : Declaration of Dibru-Saikhowa Wild Life Sanctuary (Final notification), Area – 340sq.km.
1997 : Declaration of Dibru-Saikhowa Biosphere Reserve, Area – 765sq.km. Core zone area – 340sq.km and Buffer Zone area -425sq.km.
1999 : Declaration of the entire 340sq.km. Area of the Wild Life Sanctuary as Dibru-Saikhowa National Park.

Objectives of the Study :

The habitats of Dibru-Saikhowa are not only ecologically important but also shelter the endemic birds of Assam area with the species like Black-breasted Parrot Bill (***Paradoxornis flavirostris)***, Marsh Babbler (***Pellorneum palustre),*** and also the Manipur Bush Quail ***(Perdicula manipurenis)***. These are the only three species identified by BNHS in their Important Bird Areas (IBA) programme for the Assam area as a part of the Endemic Bird Areas of India. The survey proposes to concentrate on the birds of Dibru-Saikhowa National Park to prepare an up-to-date checklist, which is the urgent need of the hour to monitor the rich bird diversity of this Biosphere Reserve that is having a serious threat of anthropogenic pressure. Though declining in numbers, presence of at least 20 species of globally threatened birds in the park could be confirmed.

Methodology:

There were four stages in this field work which include

a) Pre-field stage consists of collection of data from various checklists, trip list and from the review of previous literature.

b) Field stage consists of systematic collection of primary data in the field and both the line transact and point transect methods were adopted which were done on a regular basis i.e. at least twice a month for the last three years.

c) Extensive still photography was done by the author himself using telephoto lenses and more than 200 species of birds have been photographed till date.

d) Finally, based on all these field works and critical analysis of the previous data and literature the checklist was prepared.

Limitations of the Survey:

The limitations of this fieldwork may be outlined as follows:

i) Secondary data are not sufficiently available.

ii) Flood is a serious hazard in Dibru-Saikhowa National Park for any scientific field study. Hence, the collection of data during the rainy season was a very difficult task.

iii) The visibility is another problem for data collection due to tall and dense grassland in the fieldwork. Hence, reliance on bird calls and the accurate identification was very much essential for data collection.

iv) Moreover, there are some other problems like inclement weather, threat of wild animals like wild buffalos, wild elephants, and hindrances posed by numerous nalahs (streams) and wetlands inside the park during rainy season.

Habitat Characteristics:

Due to regular flood and water logging, evergreen species such as *Dipterocarpus macrocarpus* and *Mesua ferrea*, gradually gave way to deciduous species such as *Bischofia javanica* and *Lagerstroemia flosreginae*. (Choudhury1994). Some of the largest salix-swamps of northeast India are found in this park. Some other characteristic tree species are *Dillenia indica*, *Salix tetrasperma* and *Terminalia myriocarpa*. The characteristic features of grasslands of this biosphere reserve are that it is heavily silted as well as eroded after every flooded season. So, along with anthropogenic pressure the natural impact of flood is very intense and the intensity is gradually increasing year after year. The grassland and reed beds are covered with tall elephant-grass and the type is of tropical grassland where the main grass species are: *Seacharun spotaneum*, *Arundo donax, Cynodon dactylon, Inperata cylindrical, Phragmites karka, Erianthus ravennae, Vetiveria zizanioides, Tamarix dioca* etc. About 1/7th of the area is covered with wetlands where residential as well as migratory water fowl congregate seasonally. Therefore, as a whole the vegetation type of Dibru-Saikhowa is of tropical moist deciduous forest where there are some pockets of tropical evergreen forest.

Conservation Problems

There are two forest villages (FV) inside the national park with their scattered hamlets where at least eight thousand people live. The names of the villages are Laika and Dadhia and along with these forest villages, the fringe villages namely Dighaltarang, Baghjan, Motapung, Natungaon, Kaitia, Laina and Hatighuli do lot of timber smuggling. Moreover Laika and Dadhia are encroaching upon large areas adjacent to them for agricultural activities and animal rearing.

There are more than hundreds of *Khuties* (cattle and buffalo camps) spread over the national park. The approximate population of cattle and buffalo is more than 5000 and 4000, respectively (Choudhury 1998).More over the forest villagers and people from adjacent villages do regular fishing inside the national park. They also use poison like Dieldrin, Thiodan, etc, in winter due to which the number of wetland birds and raptors seem to be decreasing year after year. As already mentioned above annual floods and erosion by rivers and channels are major natural hazards for this national park.

Suggestions:

Adequate protection of existing habitat should be assured. The grasslands are also the breeding ground for Black-breasted parrotbill (***Paradoxornis flavirostris***) along with some other important grassland species. A detailed survey of birds of Dibru-Saikhowa Biosphere Reserve with the help of taped voice playback should be the initial stage for identification, conservation, and management of the national park.

Immediate measures should be taken to remove all illegal cattle and buffalo farm from this National Park. Grazing should be stopped at any cost from the nearby villages as well as the forest villages should be rehabilitated outside this National Park. There must be some awareness programme in and around the villages, engaging the local people and proper monitoring should be there for the right implementation of man and biosphere programme.

An Annotated checklist of the Birds of Dibru-Saikhowa National Park

The following checklist includes all 381 species known by the authors to have been reliably recorded within the limits of the Park boundary up to May,2005.

The following abbreviations have been used for species status symbols:

BR = Breeding Resident
W = Winter visitor
L = Local & altitudinal migrant
Sm = Summer migrant
S = Stray or Vagrant
? = Lack of definite information.

R = Resident
P = Passage migrant
C = Common
U = Uncommon
O = Occasional

Habitat

A = Aerial
D = Distributed areas (including cultivation)
G = Grassland
OA = Open areas
SE = Semi-evergreen forest
WT = Water bodies (including rivers)
SF = Swamp forest and riparian woodland

Threat category according to Birdlife International (2001) has been given as below

EN **=** Endangered
DD **=** Data deficient
RR **=** Restricted range
VU **=** Vulnerable
NT **=** Near threatened

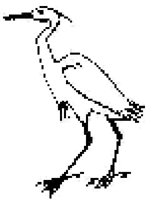
The common English and scientific names are followed by status symbols, threat category and type of habitat.

ORDER **: Podicipediformes** FAMILY : Podicipedidae
GREBES
1. GREAT CRESTED GREBE *Podiceps cristatus* W,C ***WT***
2. LITTLE GREBE *Tachybaptus ruficollis* BR,L,C ***WT***

ORDER : **Pelecaniformes** FAMILY : Pelecanidae
PELICANS
3. GREAT WHITE PELICAN *Pelecanus onocrotalus* W,U ***WT***
4. SPOT-BILLED PELICAN *Pelecanus philippensis* R,L,C **VU** ***WT***

ORDER : **Pelecaniformes** FAMILY : Phalacrocoracidae
CORMORANTS
5. GREAT CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax carbo* L,C ***WT***
6. INDIAN CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis* R,U ***WT***
7. LITTLE CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax niger* BR,C ***WT***
8. DARTER *Anhinga melanogaster* R,C **NT** ***WT***

ORDER : **Ciconiformes** FAMILY : Ardeidae
HERONS, EGRETS, BITTERNS
9. WHITE-BELLIED HERON *Ardea insignis* L,O **EN** ***WT***
10. GREY HERON *Ardea cinerea* R,C ***WT***
11. PURPLE HERON *Ardea purpurea* R,C ***WT***
12. LITTLE HERON *Ardeola striatus* BR,C ***WT***
13. INDIAN POND HERON *Ardeola grayii* R,C ***W***
14. CATTLE EGRET *Bubulcus ibis* BR,C ***D,OA***
15. LITTLE EGRET *Egretta garzetta* BR,C ***WT***
16. BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON *Nycticora nycticorax* BR,C ***WT***



17. GREAT EGRET *Ardea alba* R,C ***WT***
18. INTERMEDIATE EGRET *Egretta intermedia* R,C ***WT***
19. MALAYAN NIGHT HERON *Gorsachius melanolophus* R,U ***WT***
20. LITTLE BITTERN *Ixobrychus minutus* R,U ***WT,D***
21. CINNAMON BITTERN *Ixobrychus cinnamomeus* R,C ***WT,G***
22. YELLOW BITTERN *Ixobrychus sinensis* R,C ***WT,G***
23. BLACK BITTERN *Ixobrychus flavicollis* R,U ***WT,G***

ORDER : **Ciconiformes** FAMILY : Ciconiidae
STORKS
24. ASIAN OPENBILL *Anastomus* oscitans BR,C ***WT***
25. WOOLLY-NECKED STORK *Ciconia episcopus* R,C ***WT***
26. ORIENTAL STORK *Ciconia boyciana* W,O ***WT***
27. BLACK STORK *Ciconia nigra* W,C ***WT,SF***
28. BLACK-NECKED STORK *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus* R,L,U **NT** ***WT***
29. GREATER ADJUTANT STORK *Leptoptilos dubius* L,U **EN** ***WT,D***
30. LESSER ADJUTANT STORK *Leptoptilos javanicus* R,L,C **VU** ***WT***

ORDER : **Ciconiformes** FAMILY : Threskiornithidae
IBISES, SPOONBILL
31. GLOSSY IBIS *Plegadis falcinellus* O ***WT***

ORDER : **Anseriformes** FAMILY : Anatidae
DUCKS AND GEESE
32. GREYLAG GOOSE *Anser anser* W,C ***WT***
33. BAR-HEADED GOOSE *Anser indicus* W,C ***WT***
34. FULVOUS WHISTLING-DUCK *Dendrocygna bicolor* R,U ***WT***
35. LESSER WHISTLING-DUCK *Dendrocygna javanica* BR,C ***WT,D***
36. RUDDY SHELDUCK *Tadorna ferruginea* W,C ***WT***
37. COMMON SHELDUCK *Tadorna tadorna* W,U ***WT***
38. NORTHERN PINTAIL *Anas acuta* W,C ***WT***
39. SPOT-BILLED DUCK *Anas poecilorhyncha* BR,C ***WT,D***
40. MALLARD *Anas platyrhynchos* W,C ***WT***
41. GARGANEY *Anas querquedula* W,C – Recorded by Manoj Nair ***WT***
42. GADWALL *Anas strepera* W,C ***WT***
43. FALCATED TEAL *Anas falcata* W,O ***WT***
44. WIGEON *Anas penelope* W,C ***WT***
45. NORTHERN SHOVELER *Anas clypeata* W,C ***WT***
46. RED-CRESTED POCHARD *Netta rufina* W,U ***WT***
47. COMMON TEAL *Anas crecca* R,C ***WT***
48. COMMON POCHARD *Aythya ferina* W,C ***WT***
49. FERRUGINOUS POCHARD *Aythya nyroca* W,U **NT** ***WT***
50. BAER'S POCHARD *Aythya baeri* W,U **VU** ***WT***
51. TUFTED DUCK *Aythya fuligula* W,C ***WT***
52. COTTON PYGMY-GOOSE *Nettapus coromandelianus* R,L,C ***WT***
53. COMMON MERGANSER *Mergus merganser* W,U ***WT***
54. WHITE-WINGED DUCK *Cairina scutulata* BR,O **EN** ***SF***

ORDER : **Falconiformes** FAMILY : Accipitridae
HAWKS, EAGLES, VULTURES, etc.
55. BLACK-SHOULDERED KITE *Elanus caeruleus* BR,C ***OA,G***
56. BLACK BAZA *Aviceda leuphotes* R,L,C ***SE,OA***
57. ORIENTAL HONEY-BUZZARD *Pernis ptilorhyncus* R,L ***OA,G***
58. COMMON BUZZARD *Buteo buteo* O ***OA***
59. BLACK KITE *Milvus migrans govinda* R,C ***OA***
60. SHIKRA *Accipiter badius* R,C ***OA, A***
61. EURASIAN SPARROW- HAWK *Accipiter nisus* R,L,C ***OA,G***
62. CHANGEABLE HAWK-EAGLE *Spizaetus cirrhatus* BR,C ***WT***
63. BONELLI'S EAGLE Hieraaetus *fasciatus* **?** O
64. BOOTED EAGLE *Hieraaetus pennatus* R,W,U ***OA***

65. GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE *Aquila clanga* W,R,C **VU** ***WT,OA***
66. PALLAS'S FISH EAGLE *Haliaeetus leucoryphus* W,R,L,C **VU** ***WT,OA***
67. GREY-HEADED FISH EAGLE *Ichthyophaga ichthyaetus* BR,C **NT** ***WT***
68. LESSER FISH EAGLE *Ichthyophaga humilis* **?** O
69. RED-HEADED VULTURE *Sarcogyps calvus* R,U **NT** ***OA***
70. HIMALAYAN GRIFFON *Gyps himalayensis* W,C ***OA, D, SF***
71. WHITE-BACKED VULTURE *Gyps bengalensis* BR,C **CR** ***OA, D, SF***
72. LONG-BILLED VULTURE *Gyps indicus* BR,C **CR** ***OA, D, SF***
73. HEN HARRIER *Circus cyaneus* W,U ***G,OA***
74. PALE OR PALLID HARRIER *Circus macrourus* W,U **NT** ***G,OA***
75 PIED HARRIER *Circus melanoleucos* M,W,C ***G,OA,WT***
76. MARSH HARRIER *Circus aeruginosus* W,C ***G,OA,WT***
77. CRESTED SERPENT EAGLE *Spilornis cheela* BR,C ***G,OA,WT***
78. BLACK EAGLE *Ictinaetus malayensis* R,U – Recorded by Manoj Nair ***OA***

ORDER : **Falconiformes** FAMILY : Pandionidae
79. OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus* R,W,C ***WT***

ORDER : **Falconiformes** FAMILY : Falconidae
FALCONS
80 PIED FALCONET *Microhierax melanoleucos* R,U ***G, OA, SF***
81 PEREGRINE FALCON *Falco peregrinus japonensis* W,U ***G, OA, SF***
82. ORIENTAL HOBBY *Falco severus* U ***G, OA, SF***
83. COMMON KESTREL *Falco tinnunculus* W,C ***G, OA***
84. AMUR FALCON *Falco Amurensis* W,C - Recorded by Manoj Nair ***G, OA***
85. EURASIAN HOBBY *Faleo Subbuteo* W,U - Recorded by Manoj Nair ***OA***

ORDER : **Galliformes** FAMILY : Phasianidae
PHEASANTS, PARTRIDGES, QUAILS,
86. BLACK FRANCOLIN *Francolinus francolinus* BR,C ***G***
87. SWAMP FRANCOLIN *Francolinus gularis* BR,C **VU** ***G***
88. MANIPUR BUSH QUAIL *Perdicula manipurensis* O **? VU** ***G***
89. KALEEJ PHEASANT *Lophura leucomelanos lathami* BR,C ***G, SF***
90. RED JUNGLEFOWL *Gallus gallus* BR,C ***SF***

ORDER : **Gruiformes** FAMILY : Turnicidae
BUTTON- QUAILS OR BUSTARD QUAILS
91. YELLOW- LEGGED BUTTON QUAIL *Turnix tanki* R,W,C ***G***

ORDER : **Gruiformes** FAMILY : Gruidae
CRANES
92. COMMON CRANE *Grus grus* O ***OA, WT***
93. SARUS CRANE Grus *antigone* O **? VU** ***OA***

ORDER : **Gruiformes** FAMILY : Rallidae
RAILS, CRAKES, COOTS
94. WHITE-BREASTED WATERHEN *Amaurornis phoenicurus* BR,C ***G, WT***
95. WATERCOCK *Gallicrex cinerea* R,U ***G, WT***
96. COMMON MOORHEN *Gallinula chloropus* BR,C ***WT***
97. PURPLE SWAMPHEN *Porphyrio porphyrio* BR,C ***WT***
98. COMMON COOT *Fulica atra* W,R,C ***WT***

ORDER : **Gruniformes** FAMILY : Heliornithidae
99. MASKED FINFOOT *Heliopais personata* O **? VU -** Recorded by Baker (July 1904) at Dighaltarang near Dibru- Saikhowa N.P. ***WT, SF***

ORDER : **Gruiformes** FAMILY : Otididae
BUSTARDS
100. BENGAL FLORICAN *Eupodotis bengalensis* BR,U **EN** ***G***

ORDER : **Charadriiformes** FAMILY : Jacanidae
JACANAS
101. PHEASANT- TAILED JACANA *Hydrophasianus chirurgus* BR,C ***WT***
102. BRONZE-WINGED JACANA *Metopidius indicus* BR,C ***WT***

ORDER : **Charadriiformes** FAMILY : Recurvirostridae
STILTS
103. BLACK-WINGED STILT *Himantopus himantopus* W,O ***WT***

ORDER : **Charadriiformes** FAMILY : Charadriinae
PLOVERS, SANDPIPERS, SNIPE
104. NORTHERN LAPWING *Vanellus vanellus* W,C ***WT***
105. GREY-HEADED LAPWING *Vanellus cinereus* W,C ***WT, OA***
106. RED-WATTLED LAPWING *Vanellus indicus* BR,C ***G, OA, WT***
107. RIVER LAPWING *Vanellus spinosus* R,U ***WT***
108. PACIFIC GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis fulva* W,C ***WT***
109. EUROPEAN GOLDEN PLOVER *Pluvialis apricaria* W,U ***OA, WT***
Recorded by Ranjan Das & Shankar Das on 28-08-05
110. LITTLE RING PLOVER *Charadrius dubius* W,C ***WT***
111. KENTISH PLOVER *Charadrius alexandrinus* W,U ***WT***
112. LESSER SAND PLOVER *Charadrius mongolus* W,P,S ***WT***
113. EURASIAN CURLEW *Numenius arquata* W,P,S ***WT***
114. SPOTTED REDSHANK *Tringa erythropus* W,C ***WT***
115. MARSH SANDPIPER *Tringa stagnatilis* W,C ***WT***
116. COMMON GREENSHANK *Tringa nebularia* W,C ***WT***
117. GREEN SANDPIPER *Tringa ochropus* W,U ***WT***
118. WOOD SANDPIPER *Tringa glareola* W,C ***WT***
119. NORDMANN'S GREENSHANK *Tringa guttifer* W,U **EN** ***WT***
120. COMMON SANDPIPER *Tringa hypoleucos* W,C ***WT***
121. PINTAIL SNIPE *Gallinago stenura* W,U ***WT, OA***
122. FANTAIL SNIPE *Gallinago gallinago* W,C ***WT, OA***
123. JACK SNIPE *Lymnocryptes minimus* W,U–Recorded by Ranjan ***G, OA, WT***
Das & Sanjay Das. Date-21-08-05
124. TEMMINCK'S STINT *Calidris temminckii* W,C ***WT***
125. LONG-TOED STINT *Calidris subminuta* W,U ***WT***
126. WHIMBREL *Numenius phaeopus* W,U - Recorded by Manoj Nair ***WT***
127. BAR – TAILED GODWIT *Limosa lapponica* W,U - Recorded by Ranjan Kr. Das & Sanjay Das. Date – 31-12-2004 ***WT***

ORDER : **Charadriiformes** FAMILY :Burhinidae
THICK-KNEE
128. EURASIAN THICK-KNEE (STONE CURLEW) Burhinus *oedicnemus* O - Recorded by Sanjay Das. Date- 06-06-2003 ***WT***

ORDER : **Charadriiformes** FAMILY : Glareolidae
PRATINCOLES OR SWALLOW-PLOVERS
129. SMALL PRATINCOLE *Glareola lactea* R,L,C ***WT***

ORDER : **Charadriiformes** FAMILY : Laridae
GULLS, TERNS
130. PALLAS'S GULL *Larus ichthyaetus* W,P,U ***WT***
131. BROWN- HEADED GULL *Larus brunnicephalus* W,C ***WT***
132. BLACK-HEADED GULL *Larus ridibundus* W,C ***WT***
133. WHISKERED TERN *Chlidonias hybridus* R,W,U ***WT***
134. RIVER TERN *Sterna aurantia* R,C ***WT***
135. BLACK-BELLIED TERN *Sterna acuticauda* R,U **NT** ***WT***

ORDER : **Columbiformes** FAMILY : Columbidae
PIGEONS, DOVES
136. THICK-BILLED GREEN PIGEON *Treron curvirostra* R,C ***SF***
137. POMPADOUR GREEN PIGEON *Treron pompadora* O ***SF***
138. YELLOW-LEGGED GREEN PIGEON *Treron phoenicoptera* R,C ***SF***
139. GREEN IMPERIAL PIGEON *Ducula aenea* BR,C ***SF***
140. PALE-CAPPED PIGEON *Columba punicea* O **VU** ***SF***
141. EURASIAN COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia decaocto* R,U ***SF***
142. RED COLLARED DOVE *Streptopelia tranquebarica* R,C ***OA, SF***
143. SPOTTED DOVE *Streptopelia chinensis* BR,C ***OA, SF***
144. EMERALD DOVE *Chalcophaps indica* BR,C ***SF***
145. ORIENTAL TURTLE DOVE *Streptopelia orientalis* BR, C ***SF, OA***

ORDER : **Columbiformes** FAMILY : Psittacidae
PARROTS
146. ALEXANDRINE PARAKEET *Psittacula eupatria* R,C ***SF***
147. ROSE-RINGED PARAKEET *Psittacula krameri* BR,C***SF***
148. RED- BREASTED PARAKEET *Psittacula alexandri* BR,C ***SF***
149. BLOSSOM-HEADED PARAKEET *Psittacula roseata* U ***SF***

ORDER : **Cuculiformes** FAMILY : Cuculidae
CUCKOOS
150. CHESTNUT-WINGED CUCKOO *Clamator coromandus* O, Sm - Recorded by Ranjan Kr. Das. Date: 30-11-02 ***SF***
151. PIED CUCKOO *Clamator jacobinus* M,U - Recorded by Ranjan Kr. Das & Sanjay Das.Date-29-04-2004. ***SF***
152. COMMON HAWK CUCKOO *Cuculus varius* O ***SF***
153. LESSER CUCKOO *Cuculus poliocephalus* P,C ***SF***
154. GREY-BELLIED CUCKOO *Cacomantis passerinus* P,C ***SF***
155. INDIAN CUCKOO *Cuculus micropterus* M,C ***SF***
156. BANDED BAY CUCKOO *Cacomantis sonneratii* L,O ***SF***
157. EMERALD CUCKOO *Chalcites maculatus* O, Sm - Recorded by Ranjan Kr. Das. Date – 25-08-2002 ***SF***
158. DRONGO CUCKOO *Surniculus lugubris* R or M - Recorded by Ranjan Kr. Das & Sanjay Das. Date -31-07-2004 ***SF***
159. ASIAN KOEL *Eudynamys scolopacea* R,L,C ***SF***
160. LARGE GREEN-BILLED MALKOHA *Rhopodytes tristis* BR,C ***SF***
161. GREATER COUCAL *Centropus sinensis* BR,C ***SF***
162. LESSER COUCAL *Centropus toulou* BR,C ***SF***
163. PLAINTIVE CUCKOO *Cacomantis merulinus* R,C - Recorded by Ranjan Kr. Das. Date – 14-05-2002 ***SF***

ORDER : **Strigiformes** FAMILY : Strigidae
OWLS
164. EURASIAN EAGLE OWL *Bubo bubo* R,U ***OA, SF***
165. BROWN FISH OWL *Ketupa zeylonensis* R,U ***OA, SF***
166. JUNGLE OWLET *Glaucidium radiatum* O **?**
167. BARRED OWLET *Glaucidium cuculoides* BR,L,C ***OA,SF***
168. BROWN HAWK-OWL *Ninox scutulata* R,C ***SF***
169. SPOTTED OWLET *Athene brama* BR,C ***OA, SF***
170. SHORT-EARED OWL *Asio flammeus* W,U - Recorded by Ranjan Kr. Das & Sanjay Das. Date – 09-03-2004 ***OA, G***
171. ORIENTAL SCOPS OWL *Otus sunia* W,U - Recorded by Manoj Nair ***SF***
172. COLLARED OWLET *Glaucidium brodiei* R,C ***SF***

ORDER : **Caprimulgiformes** FAMILY : Caprimulgidae
NIGHTJARS
173. LONG-TAILED NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus macrurus* BR,L,C ***G***
174. INDIAN NIGHTJAR *Caprimulgus asiaticus* BR,C ***G***

ORDER :**Apodiformes** FAMILY :Apodidae
SWIFTS
175. HIMALAYAN SWIFTLET *Collocalia brevirostris* M,U***A***
176. HOUSE SWIFT *Apus affinis* R,U ***A***
177. PALM SWIFT *Cypsiurus parvus* R ***A***
178. ALPINE SWIFT *Tachymarptis melba* R,U - Recorded by Manoj Nair ***A***
179. WHITE – THROATED NEEDLETAIL *Hirundapus caudacutus* Sm,U - Recorded by Manoj Nair ***A***

ORDER :**Trogoniformes** FAMILY :Trogonidae
TROGONS
180. RED-HEADED TROGON *Harpactes erythrocephalus* L,C ***SF***

ORDER : **Coraciiformes** FAMILY : Alcedinidae
KINGFISHERS
181. PIED KINGFISHER *Ceryle rudis* BR,C ***WT***
182. BLYTH'S KINGFISHER *Alcedo hercules* U **NT** ***WT***
183. COMMON KINGFISHER *Alcedo atthis* BR,C ***WT***
184. BLUE-EARED KINGFISHER *Alcedo meninting* R,U ***WT***
185. STORK-BILLED KINGFISHER *Halcyon capensis* BR,C ***WT***
186. RUDDY KINGFISHER *Halcyon coromanda* O ***WT***
187. WHITE-THROATED KINGFISHER *Halcyon smyrnensis* BR,C ***OA,G,WT***

ORDER : **Coraciiformes** FAMILY : Meropidae
BEE-EATERS
188. BLUE-TAILED BEE-EATER *Merops philippinus* R,L,C ***OA, G***
189. GREEN BEE-EATER *Merops orientalis* R,C ***OA, G***
190. BLUE-BEARDED BEE-EATER *Nyctyornis athertoni* R,U ***OA, G***
191. CHESTNUT-HEADED BEE-EATER *Merops leschenaulti* R, L,U ***OA, G***

ORDER : **Coraciiformes** FAMILY : Coraciidae
ROLLERS
192. INDIAN ROLLER *Coracias benghalensis* BR,C ***OA, G***
193. BROAD-BILLED ROLLER *Eurystomus orientalis* R,U ***OA, G***

ORDER : **Coraciiformes** FAMILY : Upupidae
HOOPOE
194. HOOPOE *Upupa epops* BR,L,C ***OA, SF, G***

ORDER : **Coraciiformes** FAMILY : *Bucerotidae*
HORNBILLS R,C
195. GREAT PIED HORNBILL *Buceros bicornis* BR,U **NT** ***SF***
196. ORIENTAL PIED HORNBILL *Anthracoceros malabaricus* BR,C ***SF***

ORDER : **Piciformes** FAMILY : Capitonidae
BARBETS
197. LINEATED BARBET *Megalaima lineata* BR,C ***SF***
198. BLUE- THROATED BARBET *Megalaima asiatica* BR,C ***SF***
199. COPPERSMITH *Megalaima haemacephala* BR,C ***SF***

ORDER : **Piciformes** FAMILY : Picidae
PICULETS, WOODPECKERS
200. SPECKLED PICULET *Picumnus innominatus* R,C ***SF***
201. WHITE-BROWED PICULET *Sasia ochracea* R,C ***SF***
202. RUFOUS WOODPECKER *Micropternus brachyurus* BR,C ***SF***
203. STREAK-THROATED WOODPECKER *Picus myrmecophoneus* BR,C ***SF***
204. GREY-HEADED WOODPECKER *Picus canus* R,U ***SF***
205. GREATER YELLOWNAPE *Picus flavinucha* BR,C ***SF***
206. LESSER YELLOWNAPE *Picus chlorolophus* BR,C ***SF***
207. HIMALAYAN FLAMEBACK *Dinopium shorii* R,U ***SF***
208. COMMON FLAMEBACK *Dinopium javanense* R,U ***SF***
209. FULVOUS-BREASTED PIED WOODPECKER *Picoides macei* R,C ***SF***
210. STRIPEBREASTED PIED WOODPECKER *Dendrocopos atratus* BR,U ***SF***
211. GREATER FLAMEBACK *Chrysocolaptes lucidus* BR,C ***SF***
212. GREY – CAPPED PYGMY WOOD – PECKER *Dendrocopus caincapilllus* R,U - Recorded by Manoj Nair ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Alaudidae
LARKS
213. ASHY-CROWNED SPARROW LARK *Eremopterix grisea* R,C ***OA, G***
214. RUFOUS-WINGED BUSH LARK *Mirafra assamica* R,C ***OA,G***
215. SAND LARK *Calandrella raytal* R,U ***OA, G***
216. SMALL SKYLARK *Alauda gulgula* R,W,L,C ***OA, G***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Hirundinidae
SWALLOWS
217. COLLARED SAND MARTIN *Riparia riparia* R,L,O ***A, WT***
218. PLAIN MARTIN *Riparia paludicola* R,L,C ***A, WT***
219. BARN SWALLOW *Hirundo rustica* L,C ***A, WT***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Laniidae
SHRIKES
220. LONG-TAILED SHRIKE *Lanius schach* W,C ***OA, SF, G***
221. GREY-BACKED SHRIKE *Lanius tephronotus* W,C ***OA, SF, G***
222. BROWN SHRIKE *Lanius cristatus* W,C ***OA, SF, G***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Oriolidae
ORIOLES
223. BLACK-HOODED ORIOLE *Oriolus xanthornus* BR,C ***SF***
224. MAROON ORIOLE *Oriolus traillii* U ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Dicruridae
DRONGOS
225. BLACK DRONGO *Dicrurus adsimilis* BR,C ***OA, SF, G***
226. ASHY DRONGO *Dicrurus leucophaeus* R,W,C ***OA, SF***
227. BRONZED DRONGO *Dicrurus aeneus* L,W,C ***OA, SF***
228. SPANGLED DRONGO *Dicrurus hottentottus* R,C ***SF***
229. LESSER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO *Dicrurus remifer* BR,C ***SF***
230. GREATER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO *Dicrurus paradiseus* R,C ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Artamidae
WOOD SWALLOWS
231. ASHY WOODSWALLOW *Artamus fuscus* BR,C ***OA, G***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Sturnidae
STARLINGS, MYNAS
232. SPOT-WINGED STARLING *Saroglossa spiloptera* W,C ***SF***
233.CHESTNUT-TAILED STARLING *Sturnus malabaricus* R,C ***OA, SF***
234.BRAHMINY STARLING *Sturnus pagodarum* S ***SF***
235.PIED MYNA *Sturnus contra* BR,C ***SF***
236.COMMON MYNA *Acridotheres tristis* BR,C ***OA, SF, G***
237.COMMON STARLING *Sturnus vulgaris* W,U ***OA, SF, G***
238.BANK MYNA *Acridotheres ginginianus* S ***OA, SF***
239.JUNGLE MYNA *Acridotheres fuscus* BR,C ***OA, SF, G***
240.WHITE-VENTED MYNA *Acridotheres javanicus* BR,C ***OA, SF, G***
241.HILL MYNA *Gracula religiosa* BR,C ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Corvidae
CROWS, MAGPIES, JAYS, etc.
242.GREEN MAGPIE *Cissa chinensis* R,U ***SF***
243.RUFOUS TREE-PIE *Dendrocitta vagabunda* BR,C ***SF***
244.GREY TREE-PIE *Dendrocitta formosae* R,L,U ***SF***
245.HOUSE CROW *Corvus splendens* BR,C ***OA***
246.LARGE-BILLED CROW *Corvus macrorhynchos* BR,C ***OA, SF G***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Campephagidae
CUCKOO-SHRIKES, MINIVETS, etc.
247.BAR-WINGED FLYCATCHER- SHRIKE *Hemipus picatus* L,U ***SF***
248.LARGE WOOD-SHRIKE *Tephrodornis gularis* R ***SF***
249.COMMON WOOD-SHRIKE *Tephrodornis pondicerianus* R,C ***SF***
250.LARGE CUCKOO-SHRIKE *Coracina novaehollandiae* BR,C ***SF***
251.BLACK-WINGED CUCKOO-SHRIKE *Coracina melaschistos* L,U ***SF***
252.SCARLET MINIVET *Pericrocotus flammeus* R,C ***SF***
253.SHORT-BILLED MINIVET *Pericrocotus brevirostis* L,C ***SF***
254.ROSY MINIVET *Pericrocotus roseus* R,U ***SF***
255.SMALL MINIVET *Pericrocotus cinnamomeus* R,U ***SF***
256.BLACK-NAPED MONARCH *Hypothymis azurea* R,U ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Irenidae
IORAS, LEAFBIRDS
257.COMMON IORA *Aegithina tiphia* BR,C ***SF***
258.GOLDEN- FRONTED LEAFBIRD *Chloropsis aurifrons* R,C ***SF***
259.BLUE –WINGED LEAFBIRD *Chloropsis cochinchinensis* R,U ***SF***

260.ORANGE-BELLIED LEAFBIRD *Chloropsis hardwickii* R,U ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Pycnonotidae

BULBULS

261.BLACK-CRESTED YELLOW BULBUL *Pycnonotus melanicterus Flaviventris* R,C ***SF***
262. RED-WHISKERED BULBUL *Pycnonotus jocosus* BR,C ***SF, G***
263. RED-VENTED BULBUL *Pycnonotus cafer* BR,C ***SF, G***
264. WHITE-THROATED BULBUL *Cringer flaveolus* R,L,C ***SF***
265. ASHY BULBUL *Hypsipetes flavalus* O ***SF***
266. BLACK BULBUL *Hypsipetes madagascariensis* W,C ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Muscicapidae
SUBFAMILY : Timaliinae

BABBLERS

267.PUFF-THROATED BABBLER *Pellorneum ruficeps* BR,C ***SF***
268.MARSH SPOTTED BABBLER *Pellorneum palustre* BR,C ***G, SF***
269. ABBOTT'S BABBLER *Trichastoma abbotti* R,O - Recorded by Ranjan Kr. Das & Sanjay Das. Date – 10-03-2004 ***G, SF***
270.BUFF-BREASTED BABBLER *Pellorneum tickelli* R,U ***SF***
271. WHITE-BROWED SCIMITAR-BABBLER *Pomatorhinus schisticeps* R,C ***SF, G***
272.RED-FRONTED BABBLER *Stachyris rufifrons* L,O ***SF***
273.GREY-THROATED BABBLER *Stachyris nigriceps* L,U ***SF***
274. STRIPED TIT-BABBLER *Macronous gularis* BR,C ***SF***
275. CHESTNUT-CAPPED BABBLER *Timalia pileata* BR,C ***G***
276. JERDON'S BABBLER *Chrysomma altirostre* BR,U ***G***
277. BLACK –BREASTED PARROTBILL *Paradoxornis flavirostris* BR,U **RR,VU** ***G***
278. STRIATED BABBLER *Turdoides earlei* BR,U ***SF, G***
279. EYE BROWED WREN BABBLER *Napothera epilepidota* R,U - Recorded by Sanjay Das. Date – 21-04-2005 ***G***
280. LESSER NECKLACED LAUGHING-THRUSH *Garrulax monileger* R,C ***SF***
281. RUFOUS-NECKED LAUGHING-THRUSH *Garrulax ruficollis* BR,C ***SF***
282. GREATER NECKLACED LAUGHING-THRUSH *Garrulax pectoralis* R,C ***SF***
283. WHITE-BELLIED YUHINA *Yuhina zantholeuca* W,U ***SF***
284. NEPAL FULVETTA *Alcippe nipalensis* W,U ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Muscicapidae
SUBFAMILY : Muscicapinae

FLYCATCHER

285. FERRUGINOUS FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa ferruginea* R,C ***SF***
286.RED-THROATED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa parva* W,C***SF***
287.SLATY-BLUE FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa leucomelanura* W,C ***SF***
288.SAPPHIRE FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa sapphira* L,U ***SF***
289. LITTLE PIED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa westermanni* L,C - Recorded by Ranjan Kr. Das. ***SF***
290.LARGE NILTAVA *Muscicapa grandis* W,C ***SF***
291.SMALL NILTAVA *Muscicapa macgrigoriae* W,C ***SF***
292.RUFOUS-BELLIED NILTAVA *Muscicapa sundara* L,C ***SF***
293.PALE-CHINNED FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa poliogenys* R,U ***SF***
294.VERDITER FLYCATCHER *Muscicapa thalassina* W,C ***SF***
295. GREY-HEADED CANARY FLYCATCHER *Culicicapa ceylonensis* W,C ***SF***
296. WHITE- THROATED FANTAIL FLYCATCHER *Rhipidura albicollis* R,U ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Muscicapidae
SUBFAMILY : Sylviinae

WARBLERS

297.SLATY-BELLIED TESIA *Tesia olivia* L,C ***G***
298.PALE-FOOTED BUSH WARBLER *Cettia pallidipes* W,O***G***
299.BROWNISH-FLANKED BUSH WARBLER *Cettia fortipes* W,U ***G***
300.CHESTNUT- CROWNED BUSH WARBLER *Cettia major* R,L,U ***G***
301.ABERRANT BUSH WARBLER *Cettia flavolivacea* L,C ***G***
302.GREY-SIDED BUSH WARBLER *Cettia brunnifrons* W,U ***G***
303.SPOTTED BUSH WARBLER *Bradypterus thoracicus* W,U ***G***
304. CHINESE BUSH WARBLER *Bradypterus tacsanowskius* W,U - Recorded by Ranjan Kr. Das. Date 27-02-2004 ***G***
305.ZITTING CISTICOLA *Cisticola juncidis* R,C ***G, OA***
306.PLAIN PRINIA *Prinia subflava* R,C ***G***
307.YELLOW-BELLIED PRINIA *Prinia flaviventris* R,C ***G***
308.GREY-BREASTED PRINIA *Prinia hodgsonii* O ***G***
309.GRACEFUL PRINIA *Prinia gracilis* R,U ***G***
310.RUFOUS-VENTED PRINIA *Prinia burnesii* R,U **NT** ***G***
311.RUFOUS-RUMPED GRASSBIRD *Graminicola bengalensis* R,U ***G***
312. MOUTAIN TAILOR BIRD *Orthotomus cuculatus* L,O ***G***
313.COMMON TAILORBIRD *Orthotomus sutorius* BR,C ***G, SF, OA***
314. STRIATED GRASSBIRD *Megalurus palustris* BR,C ***G***
315. THICK-BILLED WARBLER *Acrocephalus aedon* W,C ***G***
316. CLAMOROUS REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus stentoreus* W,C - Recorded by Ranjan Kr. Das. Date – 23-01-2004 ***G***
317. BLACK-BROWED REED WARBLER *Acrocephalus bistrigiceps* W,U ***G***
318.PADDYFIELD WARBLER *Acrocephalus agricola* W,C ***G***
319.LESSER WHITETHROAT Sylvia *curruca minula* W, S?
320.TICKELL'S LEAF WARBLER *Phylloscopus affinis* W,C ***G, SF***
321.SMOKY WILLOW WARBLER *Phylloscopus fuligiventer* W,U ***SF, G***
322.DUSKY LEAF WARBLER *Phylloscopus fuscatus* W,C ***SF, G***
323.GREENISH LEAF WARBLER *Phylloscopus trochiloides* W,C ***SF***
324. EASTERN CROWNED LEAF WARBLER *Phylloscopus coronatus* W,O ***SF***
325.BLYTH'S LEAF WARBLER *Phylloscopus reguloides* W,C ***G***
326.YELLOW-VENTED WARBLER *Phylloscopus cantator* W,U **RR** ***G***
327.GOLDEN-SPECTACLED WARBLER *Seicercus burkii* R,W,C ***SF***
328.GREY-HOODED WARBLER *Seicercus xanthoschistos* L,O ***SF, G***
329.CHESTNUT-CROWNED WARBLER *Seicercus castaniceps* W,L,O ***G***
330.YELLOW-BELLIED WARBLER *Abroscopus superciliaris* R,L,U ***G***

331. BRIGHT – HEADED CISTICOLA *Cisticola exilis* R,U - Recorded by Ranjan Kr. Das. Date – 21-04-2005 ***G***
332.ASHY PRINIA *Prinia socialis* R,U ***G***
333. HUME'S WARBLER *Phylloscopus humei* W,U - Recorded by Manoj Nair ***SF, G***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Muscicapidae
SUBFAMILY : Turdinae

THRUSHES, CHATS
334.BLUETHROAT *Erithacus svecicus* W,U ***OA,G***
335.HIMALAYAN RUBYTHROAT *Erithacus pectoralis* W,O ***G***
336.ORIENTAL MAGPIE-ROBIN *Copsychus saularis* BR,C ***OA, SF, G***
337.SHAMA *Copsychus malabaricus* BR,C ***SF***
338.BLACK REDSTART *Phoenicurus ochruros* W ***SF***
339.DAURIAN REDSTART *Phoenicurus auroreus* W,C ***SF***
340.WHITE-TAILED BLUE ROBIN *Cinclidium leucurum* W,O ***SF***
341.STONECHAT *Saxicola torquata* W,C ***G, OA***
342.WHITE-TAILED STONECHAT *Saxicola leucura* W,U **?** ***G***
343.JERDON'S BUSHCHAT *Saxicola jerdoni* R,U ***SF, G***
344.GREY BUSHCHAT *Saxicola ferrea* W,U ***G***
345.BLUE WHISTLINGTHRUSH *Myiophonus caeruleus* L,C ***OA, SF***
346. BLACK-BREASTED THRUSH *Turdus dissimilis* O ***SF***
347.RED-THROATED THRUSH *Turdus ruficollis ruficollis* W,U ***SF***
348. LESSER SHORTWING *Brachypteryx leucophrys* W,L,O - Recorded by Sanjay Das and Samuel Klansson, Sweeden. Date 23-03-2005 ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Paridae
TITS OR TITMICE
349. SULTAN TIT *Melanochlora sultanea* L,U ***SF***
350.GREAT TIT *Parus major* BR,C ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Sittidae
NUTHATCHES, CREEPERS
351.CHESTNUT-BELLIED NUTHATCH *Sitta castanea* R,C ***SF***
352.VELVET-FRONTED NUTHATCH *Sitta frontalis* R,U ***SF***
353. WALL CREEPER *Tichodroma muraria* W,S - Recorded by Pankaj Sharma. Date 23-12-2003 ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Motacillidae
PIPITS AND WAGTAILS
354. OLIVE-BACKED PIPIT *Anthus hodgsoni* W,C ***SF***
355. RICHARD'S PIPIT *Anthus richardi* W,C ***OA, G***
356. PADDYFIELD PIPIT *Anthus novaeseelandiae* R,C ***OA,G***
357. BLYTH'S PIPIT *Anthus godlewskii* W ***G***
358. ROSY PIPIT *Anthus roseatus* W,C ***OA, G***
359. FOREST WAGTAIL *Motacilla indica* M,O ***G***
360. YELLOW WAGTAIL *Motacilla flava* W,C ***OA, G, WT***
361. CITRINE WAGTAIL *Motacilla citreola* W,C ***OA, G, WT***
362. GREY WAGTAIL *Motacilla cinerea* W,C ***OA, G, WT***
363.WHITE WAGTAIL *Motacilla alba* W,C ***OA, G, WT***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Dicaeidae
FLOWERPECKERS
364. PALE-BILLED FLOWERPECKER *Dicaeum erythrorhynchos* R,L,C ***SF***
365.SCARLET-BACKED FLOWERPECKER *Dica cruentatum* R,C ***SF***
366.FIRE-BREASTED FLOWERPECKER *Dicaeu ignipectus* L,C ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Nectarinidae
SUNBIRDS
367.RUBY-CHEEKED SUNBIRD *Anthreptes singalensis* L,C ***SF***
368.PURPLE SUNBIRD *Nectarinia asiatica* R,U ***SF***
369.BLACK-BREASTED SUNBIRD *Aethopyga saturata* W,U ***SF***
370.CRIMSON SUNBIRD *Aethopyga siparaja* BR,C ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Zosteropidae
WHITE-EYE
371.ORIENTAL WHITE-EYE *Zosterops palpebrosus* BR,C ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** SUBFAMILY : Passerinae
SPARROWS
372. HOUSE SPARROW *Passer domesticus* BR,C ***OA, SF***
373. EURASIAN TREE SPARROW *Passer montanus* R,C ***SF***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Ploceidae
SUBFAMILY : Ploceinae

WEAVER BIRDS, BAYAS
374.BAYA WEAVER BIRD *Ploceus philippinus* BR,L,C ***OA, G***
375. BLACK- THROATED WEAVER BIRD *Ploceus benghalensis* R,L,C ***G***
376.STREAKED WEAVER BIRD *Ploceus manyar* BR,C ***G***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** SUBFAMILY : Estrildinae
MUNIAS
377. WHITE-BACKED MUNIA *Lonchura striata* BR,U ***G***
378. SCALY-BREASTED MUNIA *Lonchura punctulata* BR,C ***G***
379. BLACK-HEADED MUNIA *Lonchura malacca* BR,C ***G***

ORDER : **Passeriformes** FAMILY : Emberizidae
BUNTINGS
380. YELLOW-BREASTED BUNTING *Emberiza aureola* W,C ***OA, G***
381. BLACK-FACED BUNTING *Emberiza spodocephala* W,C ***OA, G***

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CORRESPONDENCE

GREY HEADED CANARY FLYCATCHER.

PRADEEP KUMAR SHARMA. Opp. Carmel Convent School, Nahan - Shimla Road, Nahan, Dist. Sirmour Himachal Pradesh - 173001

Nahan town, the Headquarters of Sirmour District and capital of erstwhile Sirmour State was known for its orchards. It is said that a saint had planted 1,50,000 mango plants in and around Nahan town. Due to many orchards in the town many places are still named with suffix - Baag (means orchard) e.g.. Chauhan-ka-Baag (Orchard of Chauhan), Rani-ka-Baag (Orchard of Queen), to name a few. With the passage of time the process of urbanization started and the people started moving toward Nahan town from all parts of the District, forcing these "Baags" to lose their importance as orchards and become a lucrative source of income as real estate. New colonies stated coming up in these Baags (Orchards). I also live in one such colony. In front of my house there were a few very tall trees of Eucalyptus and a few trees of Mango. A small Bauri (a small structure constructed in old time to collect water for drinking purpose) and a perennial brook flows in the area. I used to watch many birds there in the mornings and evenings. Every evening my attention was specially drawn by a special small active bird with a lot of noise of chirping and brisk movements, probably to catch the flies. The bird used to be active for about an hour or so before sunset. I was having some Field Guides about birds, but I could not find this bird in any of these books, finally I purchased a book "Pocket Guide to the Birds of the Indian Subcontinent by Grimmet Richard, Inskipp Carol, Inskipp Tim, Oxford University Press". From which I could identify this bird as "Grey Headed Canary Flycatcher" (*Culicicapa ceylonensis*).

As new houses started coming up people felt apprehensive about this tall Eucalyptus tree because of its huge size. During high velocity winds, the families residing in the area used to pray for the safety of their lives and property . Finally, the residents moved an application to the concerned authority for felling this tree and permission was granted. The tree was felled safely and all the residents heaved a sigh of relief. But within a few days I realized that my evening friend "Grey Headed Canary Flycatcher" (*Culicicapa ceylonensis*) had left the place forever. For the last 2-3 years I have not heard the chirping of this bird in this area. It is not clear as to whether the flycatcher was associated with this Eucalyptus tree or whether the impact of urbanization has forced this bird to leave the area.

*BREEDING SITES OF (*Gyps bengalensis*) AND* (Gyps tenuirostris) *IN KATERNIAGHAT WILD LIFE SANCTUARY, UTTAR PRADESH.*

GOMATHI, N. Salim Ali Center for Ornithology and Natural History, Anaikatti, Coimbatore - 641 044.

The Gyps species of vulture were once common in Southeast Asia and considered the most abundant large birds of prey in the world (Houston). In the last two decades, the population of endemic Gyps species crashed in Indian sub-continent (Bird life International). They were common all over the Indian sub-continent. Some of the breeding sites recorded earlier in Uttar Pradesh were Dehra Dun

(Mohan 1996), Rajaji National Park (Pandey et al. 1994), Corbett National Park (Per. Satheesan 2000), Dudwa National Park (Javed & Rahmani 1998) and Etawah and Mainpuri districts (Gopi Sundar 2000).

Based on the message received from a reporter that more than 500 *Gyps bengalensis* were sighted on a carcass in a Sanctuary near Lekimpur Kheri, Uttar Pradesh, on 27.6. 2005, myself and field-assistant Brijender Singh made a field trip to Katerniaghat Wild Life Sanctuary, Baharaich via Mahewaganj, Sharadanagar, Girjapuri and Bichiya (as part of our vulture study).

Katerniaghat Wild Life Sanctuary falls under the Terai-Bhabar bio-geographic sub-division of the upper Gangetic plain in the Indo-Nepal border. It is situated at the Girwa riverbank and also adjacent to Dudwa National Park and Royal Chitwan National Park. Similar to Dudwa, it has sub-tropical tall grassland, locally called terrain grassland. The terrain region is a flat alluvial stretch of land lying in the Himalayan foothills and the Gangetic plain. It has moist deciduous vegetation with mixed habitations of riverine forest.

Our survey covered an area of 85 km in and around Katerniaghat Wild Life Sanctuary with suitable nesting habitat for *Gyps bengalensis.* We recorded three breeding sites of *Gyps bengalensis* within 5 km radius inside the Sanctuary. The first site was located at the co-ordinates of 28^{O} 19" 3.16' N and 08^{O} 08" 39.6 E near state farm corner. A total of 9 pairs (no.18) and three 2nd year juveniles were roosting at the top of *Bombax ceiba* (Semal) with an average of 15 m high. Five abandoned nests and blown out nests were recorded. Along with this, a *Gyps tenuirostris* was perched on an abandoned nest. The nest of this species can be easily identified by the way the nest was built. The nest was well packed by fine foliaged twigs and seen denser than the *Gyps bengalensis* nest (Per. Observation).

Another breeding site was recorded adjacent to PWD huts at the bank of river Girwa at the co-ordinates of 28^{O} 20" 071' N and 081^{O} 07" 035' E. Four pairs (no. 8) and three fledglings were seen perched at the top of *Bombax ceiba*. Third site was located at the same co-ordinates but seen opposite of the Girwa bank. When the mercury touched 45^{O}C, at 11.00 am, the soaring population of *Gyps bengalensis* reached 54. In the case of Katerniaghat Wild Life Sanctuary, they preferred *Bombax ceiba* for roosting and breeding. This may be because of easy landing, safety and probably a dominant tall species.

With a maximum of 26 pairs sighted (full adult) only three fledglings were fledged out successfully and the success was only 11.5%. Infact, it has huge population of wild ungulates particularly wild Buffaloes and sometimes very dangerous to trek inside the forested grassland. So availability of wild carcass is also high.

Two months back during the fledging season (April), a nestling and an adult vulture were found dead below the breeding trees. During our recent observation, it was found that two adult vultures seemed to be sick and with drooped heads for more than twenty minutes continuously. During my earlier observation vultures would droop their head sometimes to avoid direct sunlight; but at the same time it will be more alert and keep its head stiff. But the continuous drooping without any alertness, even when disturbed is an indication that the vultures were sick.

In some parts of India particularly in the state of Gujarat, reports show an increase in the population of gyps species and re-establishment of breeding sites. At the same time, in some of breeding sites in Rajasthan (Bayana, Dumho and Sona ke Guruja), mortality of adult and fledgling was recorded high particularly during summer. Similarly it happened in protected (Katerniaghat WLS) and remote areas too. Even though diclofenac was declared as the main reason for vulture decline, vultures feeding in remote and protected areas are also prone to mortality. So it is noteworthy to record breeding sites and foraging grounds of *Gyps bengalensis* and also important to constantly monitor those colonies with maximum population.

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A Note from the Publisher *continued ....*

harboring the virus, remaining healthy and unwittingly transmitting the virus between the breeding and wintering grounds.

It makes sense to look beyond our noses, before dismissing a possible link between the migratory birds and the avian influenza. Such subjective conjectures arrived at after decades of observation, sum up the quality of research we are capable of contributing. Sadly, lackadaisical and ill-qualified studies are prone to disregard key ecological phenomena.

The whole point is that at the December 2005 seminar, some effort was on to portray that the avian influenza currently doing the rounds, has no links with the wild birds and therefore the poultry industry should dismiss the bird flu threat and go about its business as usual. When we are talking about the bird flu and the wild bird link; never mind the assertions, statistical figures or illustrations, it is important that our fellow birdwatchers understand the elementary ecology of the migrants, so that adequate surveillance and precautionary measures can be proposed to protect poultry and humans from the deadly H5N1 virus. Luckily, though the H5N1 virus has exponentially increased its range across the world and crippled the poultry industry in India, it has till date not mutated to spread among humans. According to experts, bits of the puzzle are still missing and if we dropped our vigil now, we may be cursing ourselves later for not having given proper focus and timely attention.

Wrong poultry and farmyard practices are to be squarely blamed for the silent point of buildup and run-up to the disaster as in Maharashtra and elsewhere. The biggest bungling undoubtedly is the over-dependence on merely two pedigrees of broilers, namely Leg Horn and Road Island Red varieties. Unhygienic handling of chicken and unsafe disposal of poultry waste are also to be blamed for the present malaise. Many had not expected the virus to strike, but when it surfaced suddenly at Navapur, Maharashtra on 18th February 2006 - the authorities were caught unawares, despite months of advance warning to be prepared for such an eventuality. The warnings were not empty rhetoric, but real forebodings, based on policy statements and bulletins issued, since May 2005, by key global organizations such as WHO, FAO of UN, BLI, Wetlands International, WOAH, OIE and RSBP. The suggestions included quick diagnosis of index cases, identifying contacts and quarantining the affected area.

Rare Honour to Dr. Abraham Verghese

It is not often that I get to write about rare achievements of fellow birdwatchers and it is my good fortune that a rare occasion has come about to pen one. Our Editorial Board Member, **Dr. Abraham Verghese,** has been conferred the prestigious **"Fellow of Royal Entomological Society"** (FRES) (London), for his contribution to Entomology (Insect Science) in the last 28 years. Her Majesty the Queen of England is the patron of Royal Entomological Society (RES). With this fellowship, Dr. Verghese joins the ranks of past Fellows like Charles Darwin, Alfred R Wallace, etc. Incidentally, very few scientists have been recognized by the RES from the Asian Sub-continent, let alone from India.

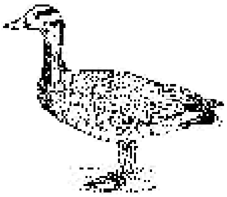
Dr. Verghese works at the Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR), Bangalore and is the Chief Editor of the journal "Pest Management in Horticultural Ecosystems." He has been actively promoting the study of insects among amateurs and professionals alike.

Dr. Verghese gave a fillip to the study of birds as a hobby in Bangalore way back in the seventies itself, along with Dr. Joseph George, Mr. Zafar Futehally, Late E. Hanumantha Rao, Dr. A.K. Chakravarthy, and others. Since then he has been contributing to bird conservation and popularizing ecological studies in India and has many feathers in his cap, including Gold Medals for his Masters and Doctorate programmes from the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore. The much coveted Fellowship of the Royal Society is the latest feather in his cap.

Dr. Abraham Verghese is the Founder Editor of "INSECT ENVIRONMENT" and I have been associated with this notable eleven year old journal as the Founder Publisher.

The occasion now for my indulgence is to join all of you in congratulating Dr. Abraham Verghese, for being conferred with the FELLOW of the ROYAL ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY, LONDON. I've known Dr. Verghese for well over three decades, more as a birdwatcher. We've been together in many conservation pursuits and to me therefore, to see a suffix – F.R.E.S. (London) after his name is very satisfying.

Wishing all of you a happy new year.



Thanking you,
Yours in bird conservation
S. Sridhar
Publisher, NLBW

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Cover : Female **Golden-backed Woodpecker** *(Dinopium benghalense)* is equipped with hard chisel like bill to hammer repeatedly into wood. The wedge-shaped tail is augmented with stiff feathers to act as a prop while the bird moves actively up and down the tree trunk. The woodpeckers are apt to be recognized as good indicators of diversity and health of forest ecosystems. They provide an array of holes for a great number of secondary hole nesting birds, which are also important in forest ecology. *Photo. S. Shreyas*